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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/796,086	03/10/2004	Shiho Okuno	250132US-2TTCRD DIV	2314

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EXAMINER

TUGBANG, ANTHONY D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3729

DATE MAILED: 10/13/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/796,086	<b>Applicant(s)</b> OKUNO ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> A. Dexter Tugbang	<b>Art Unit</b> 3729	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 September 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 20-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22-24 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 10/244,550.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/10/04, 9/5/06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election without traverse of the invention of Group I, Claims 20 through 21 in the reply filed on September 5, 2006 is acknowledged.
2. Claims 22 through 24 have been withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on September 5, 2006.

### ***Priority***

3. While the applicant(s) have amended the specification (page 1) to include the reference to parent application serial no. 10/244,550, this reference does not include the current status of the parent application, i.e. that it has matured into U.S. Patent 6,937,447. The specification should be amended to reflect the current status.

### ***Specification***

4. Applicant is reminded of the proper content of an abstract of the disclosure.

A patent abstract is a concise statement of the technical disclosure of the patent and should include that which is new in the art to which the invention pertains. If the patent is of a basic nature, the entire technical disclosure may be new in the art, and the abstract should be directed to the entire disclosure. If the patent is in the nature of an improvement in an old apparatus, process, product, or composition, the abstract should include the technical disclosure of the improvement. In certain patents, particularly those for compounds and compositions, wherein the process for making and/or the use thereof are not obvious, the abstract should set forth a process for making and/or use thereof. If the new technical disclosure involves modifications or alternatives, the abstract should mention by way of example the preferred modification or alternative.

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The abstract should not refer to purported merits or speculative applications of the invention and should not compare the invention with the prior art.

Where applicable, the abstract should include the following:

- (1) if a machine or apparatus, its organization and operation;
- (2) if an article, its method of making;
- (3) if a chemical compound, its identity and use;
- (4) if a mixture, its ingredients;
- (5) if a process, the steps.

Extensive mechanical and design details of apparatus should not be given.

5. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the content is not directed to the claimed invention (e.g. the process steps of at least Claim 20). Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

6. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: --A Method of Manufacturing a Magnetoresistance Effect Element--.

### ***Claim Objections***

7. Claim 21 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

Claim 21 depends from previously canceled Claim 1. Claim 21 has not been further treated on its merits.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Krishnamurthy et al 5,653,841, Pumphrey 5,139,376 and Motosugi et al 5,257,531.

Krishnamurthy discloses a method comprising: forming an insulating layer (e.g. 128 or 132 or 136) on a first magnetic layer (e.g. 114); forming an aperture (e.g. 140) reaching the first magnetic layer from the top surface of the insulating layer; and depositing a magnetic material to form a second ferromagnetic layer (e.g. 139) overlying the insulating layer which buries the aperture (see Fig. 3).

The first and second magnetic layers of Krishnamurthy are inherently ferromagnetic such that each can be called a “first ferromagnetic layer” and a “second ferromagnetic layer”. The examiner cites Denes (U. S. Patent 3,775,328) to show that soft magnetic material are inherently ferromagnetic (Denes, col. 1, lines 25-30 and col. 2, lines 7+).

Krishnamurthy does not mention that “thrusting a needle” forms the aperture.

To thrust a needle (e.g. drill bit) from a top surface of the insulating layer (e.g. drilling) to form an aperture is conventional and notoriously well known in the art of manufacturing apertures in insulating layers. As evidence of obviousness, the examiner cites Pumphrey and Motosugi et al as each shows thrusting a needle (e.g. drill bit) into an insulating layer from the top surface to form an aperture.

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It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have substituted the laser drilling process of Krishnamurthy for the needle thrusting process of Pumphrey and Motosugi, for the very same purpose of forming an aperture in an insulating layer.

### *Conclusion*

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

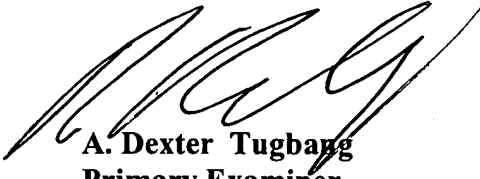
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to A. Dexter Tugbang whose telephone number is 571-272-4570.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on 571-272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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**A. Dexter Tugbang**  
**Primary Examiner**  
**Art Unit 3729**

September 30, 2006